
Researchers and the translational reality. Interview with Karen Aboody.

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Public Summary:

Karen Aboody has first-hand experience of taking a potential therapy from the laboratory into clinical trials. Here, she shares with us the challenges and rewards of going from bench to bedside, and why all biomedical researchers need to know what it takes to make the transition if they want the best chance of seeing their discoveries used to help patients. Karen Aboody received her MD at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and completed her post-doctoral training in Molecular Neurogenetics at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School. After gaining experience in pathology, gene therapy and biotechnology, she joined City of Hope (COH) in 2003 to head a translational research laboratory focused on therapeutic stem cell applications for invasive and metastatic solid tumors. In 2010, she received US FDA approval for a first-in-human clinical trial for neural stem cell-mediated therapy for high-grade glioma patients. This Phase I study is ongoing at COH, supported by NCI/NIH funding. In 2010, she received an US\$18 million California Institute of Regenerative Medicine Disease Team Award to develop a second-generation enzyme/prodrug stem cell-mediated brain tumor therapy for clinical trials that may also have applications for other metastatic cancers. Honors include the 2000 AANS Young Investigator Award, and 2008 ASGCT Outstanding New Investigator Award. She recently founded a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company, TheraBiologics Inc., to support clinical development of neural stem cell-mediated cancer therapies.

Scientific Abstract:

Karen Aboody has first-hand experience of taking a potential therapy from the laboratory into clinical trials. Here, she shares with us the challenges and rewards of going from bench to bedside, and why all biomedical researchers need to know what it takes to make the transition if they want the best chance of seeing their discoveries used to help patients. Karen Aboody received her MD at Mount Sinai School of Medicine, and completed her post-doctoral training in Molecular Neurogenetics at Massachusetts General Hospital, Harvard Medical School. After gaining experience in pathology, gene therapy and biotechnology, she joined City of Hope (COH) in 2003 to head a translational research laboratory focused on therapeutic stem cell applications for invasive and metastatic solid tumors. In 2010, she received US FDA approval for a first-in-human clinical trial for neural stem cell-mediated therapy for high-grade glioma patients. This Phase I study is ongoing at COH, supported by NCI/NIH funding. In 2010, she received an US\$18 million California Institute of Regenerative Medicine Disease Team Award to develop a second-generation enzyme/prodrug stem cell-mediated brain tumor therapy for clinical trials that may also have applications for other metastatic cancers. Honors include the 2000 AANS Young Investigator Award, and 2008 ASGCT Outstanding New Investigator Award. She recently founded a clinical-stage biopharmaceutical company, TheraBiologics Inc., to support clinical development of neural stem cell-mediated cancer therapies.

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